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LEWIS NAMES HEIDEBRECHT
UM TRACK-CROSS COUNTRY COACH

The 1979 National Junior College Coach of the Year in cross country, who led his team to an unprecedented "quadruple crown" of track and cross country titles, will become men's track and cross country coach at the University of Montana Aug. 1.

Larry L. Heidebrecht will replace Marshall Clark, who left Missoula in June to become assistant track coach at San Jose State.

UM Athletic Director Harley Lewis said Heidebrecht, chosen from a field of some 30 applicants, will have no administrative duties outside the realm of track and cross country. Clark had doubled as assistant athletic director at UM.

Since he became coach at New Mexico Junior College in Hobbs in 1976, Heidebrecht has guided the school to a national outdoor track title in 1979, plus a third-place finish in 1977, a fifth place in 1978 and a sixth place in 1980.

New Mexico JC won the national indoor track titles in 1979 and 1980, after finishing second in 1977 and third in 1978.

Heidebrecht received his national honor after New Mexico JC won the junior college national cross country crown in 1979, moving up from 18th in 1976 to 7th in 1977 and 3rd in 1978.

The "quadruple crown" included the 1979 outdoor track and cross country titles sandwiched between the 1979 and 1980 indoor track championships.

During his four years at New Mexico JC, Heidebrecht coached 104 All-Americans in track and cross country, including 14 national champions.

The 31-year-old Hutchinson, Kan., native began his coaching career in 1971 at Cheyenne Central High School in Wyoming, where he produced six straight state championship teams in cross country and track plus two national high school cross country individual champions and numerous All-Americans in track and cross country.

LEWIS NAMES HEIDEBRECHT--add one

Prior to his stint at New Mexico JC, Heidebrecht was a one-year assistant at Colorado State when the school had its highest NCAA cross country finish ever (eighth in 1975).

Heidebrecht, who will come to Missoula with his wife, Patricia, earned a bachelor's degree in history and physical education in 1970 and a master's in health education in 1974, both from the University of Northern Colorado.

Heidebrecht said he became interested in the UM job when he learned Clark might be leaving. He said he and his wife like skiing and other outdoor activities, and were attracted to this area of the country because of their stay in Wyoming.

"This is just a great opportunity for me," Heidebrecht said, "and I don't think I could have found a better job anywhere."

In terms of recruiting, Heidebrecht said there were three Montana high school athletes he would contact immediately. He also hopes to add junior college help this coming January.

"I want to build a solid cross country program, but I also want to build a really fine indoor and outdoor program," he explained. "I would think my emphasis would be in trying to win the Big Sky (Conference) indoor and outdoor (track) titles, yet still having a very representative team in cross country."

Heidebrecht considers his relationship with student-athletes his strongest suit. He built his philosophy while helping recruits adjust to moving to the remote Hobbs, N.M., area.

"One of the things I pride myself in is always having my door open. If somebody has a problem or a question, I'm going to do all that I can to take care of them.

"I try to instill a lot of enthusiasm and motivation in the kids I work with," Heidebrecht said, adding that he believes his coach-athlete relationship helps do that.

Lewis, in announcing the appointment, said, "We're really pleased to have a person of Larry's background, capabilities and experiences heading up our track and cross country programs. We know he will maintain our school's tradition in track and cross country, and bring them back to championship levels."

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